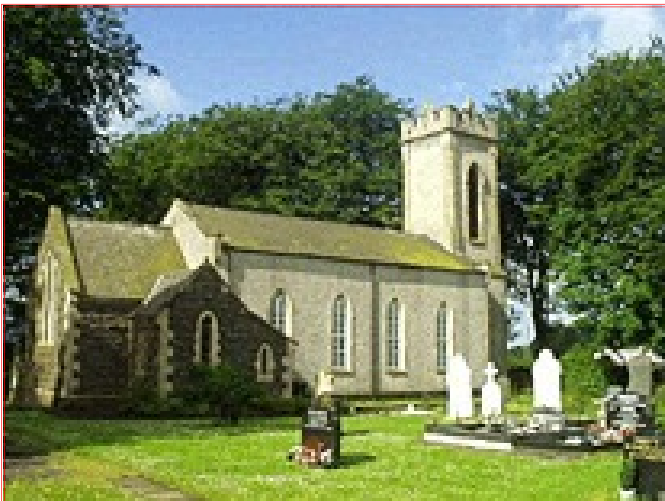


Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug



**Parish Magazine
December 2019/
January 2020**



Diocese of Connor - Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug

WHO'S WHO IN OUR PARISH



CLERGY

Rector

The Revd Mark McConnell
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Mobile No 077 5954 5932
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Curate Assistant

The Revd Emma Carson
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LAY READER

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Mr R Cotter, 6 Markstown Crescent, Cullybackey

YOUTH WORKERS

Lucy McLaughlin
3 The Commons, Broughshane
Tel 2586 1524
Mobile 077 5995 0497

Alan Ross
70 Maine Road, Shankbridge, Ballymena
Tel 2589 2740
Mobile 077 5991 6755

PARISH OFFICE

St Patrick's Hall - Tel 2563 0741 E-mail - kilconriola@btconnect.com OR ballymena@connor.anglican.org
Web Site - ballymena.connor.anglican.org and Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ballymenaparish>
Open - Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs Lorraine McBride

CHURCHWARDENS

St Patrick's	Rector's	Mr Jim Thompson
	People's	Mrs Angela Thompson
Ballyclug	Rector's	Mrs Ruth McNeill
	People's	Mr Jackie Greer
St Columba's	Rector's	Mrs Liz Hughes
	People's	Mr Billy Taylor
Glebe Wardens	Rector's	Mr Kenneth Hughes
	People's	Mr Billy Gillespie

SELECT VESTRY

Clergy, Church Wardens, Glebe Wardens and: Mr Richard Cotter, Mrs Anne Crawford, Mrs Debbie Crawford, Mr Dessie Dunlop, Mr Ronnie Fleming, Mrs Vera Greer, Mr Les Hughes, Mr Alex McKay, Mrs Dawn McLean, Mr Jackie McMaster, Mr Alex McNeill and Mr Oliver Reid.

Honorary Secretary:	Mr R Fleming	44 Meadowvale, Ballymena
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr R Cotter	6 Markstown Crescent, Cullybackey
Sextons:	St Patrick's	Mr John Linton
	St Columba's	Mr Andrew Clarke
Organists:	St Patrick's	Mr Adrian Poston, Mr Frank Hewitt and Dr Iris Millar
	St Columba's	2 Vacant



ARE YOU READY FOR CHRISTMAS?

It really is coming fast and there is so much to do - to buy - to prepare. My heart gave a skip as I started noticing Christmas lights and decorations already up and lit - at the start of November! (That's maybe a little too ready).

Christmas is a once a year event that seems to take over our homes and our time yet it is so much more - as one article I read recently so aptly put it - there were no mince pies in the manger!



We seem to prepare for everything but welcoming the Saviour into the world and each year in a fresh way into our world.



Christmas is not just a once a year event but a once in eternity event. Jesus was born, this is how God loves us. Jesus was born, this is how God fixes us. Jesus was born, this is how God gives us faith and hope. How will you prepare for this real Christmas. Many in ancient times especially in the run up to Christmas would seek out quiet lonely places and simply be still and quiet and away from all distractions - how divine does that prayer discipline sound - mine is a manic drive through traffic for an extra jar of cranberry sauce with Slade on the Radio, so far from peaceful and reflective.

So a once a year madness, or, a once in eternity gift - what Christmas will you prepare for?

From all the McConnell's may God grant you His joy, faith and wonder this Christmas.

God Bless,

Mark, Cherith and the family

O Emmanuel

O come, O come, and be our God-with-us
O long-sought With-ness for a world without,
O secret seed, O hidden spring of light.
Come to us Wisdom, come unspoken Name
Come Root, and Key, and King, and holy Flame,
O quickened little wick so tightly curled,
Be folded with us into time and place,
Unfold for us the mystery of grace
And make a womb of all this wounded world.
O heart of heaven beating in the earth,
O tiny hope within our hopelessness
Come to be born, to bear us to our birth,
To touch a dying world with new-made hands
And make these rags of time our swaddling bands.

by *Malcolm Guite*





Christmas Fair

&

Coffee Morning

Saturday 7th December

St Patrick's Church Halls

10am – 1pm

(In aid of church funds)





Parish News

ADVENT

During Advent we will be having our mid week evening service in Ballyclug. This will take place on the first 3 Wednesdays of December - 4th, 11th and 18th at 7.30 pm.

Also during Advent, as in the past, the Ballymena Church Members Forum is hosting a series of Advent Reflections in 4 of the local churches. Each lasts about 30 minutes starting at 12.30 pm.

The details are:- 28th Nov. - All Saints' Church; 5th Dec. - West Church; 12th Dec. - St Patrick's Church and 19th Dec. - Ballymena Methodist Church.

2020 ENVELOPES

CRG envelopes for 2020 are now available for distribution - bags at the back of churches.

A sincere thank you to all our distributors deliver your envelopes directly to your door. Without the help of everyone involved

this would be a huge task and we are extremely grateful to you all. We do, however, require more distributors. If you feel you can help please contact the office. Parishioners living in country areas will find their envelopes at the back of church.

LEPROSY MISSION



The Leprosy Mission
Northern Ireland

A channel for God's love to people with leprosy

The total donated in the little red boxes in 2019 was £533.01. I am very grateful to all those who contributed to this very worthwhile cause.

TLM Northern Ireland supports work in Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Tanzania and Bangladesh. There are a number of videos highlighting The Leprosy Mission's work around the world and these can be seen on <https://www.tlm-ni.org/resources/media>

Your help is, as always, much appreciated by The Leprosy Mission.

Christie Colhoun

RECORDED SERVICES PLEA FOR HELP

It is becoming increasingly difficult for Richard Cotter to continue recording services for the elderly. Richard has done a terrific job over a long period of time but he is no longer able to do the recordings on a regular basis. However, he is very willing to train anyone interested in this important activity. The recording is done once a month in St Patrick's usually on the second Sunday at the 11.30 am service. It is much appreciated by those no longer able to attend church. Anyone interested please speak to the Rector, Churchwardens or me at 028 2564 2463.

Trevor Halliday

BALLYMENA CHURCH MEMBERS FORUM - Arts Trail Care for Creation

Nine churches, some local community groups and schools will be involved in this project which will attempt to illuminate the crisis in our world today as climate change and pollution are threatening our very survival.

Workshops will be held in November and January when the groups

involved will work together to create posters illustrating these issues. Some will be through paintings others through poetry or photography.

Assistance will be given by local artists supplied by the Braid Arts Centre.

Next spring some of the artworks will be displayed in the town's bus shelters where space has been reserved and all other work will be shown in an exhibition in the Braid.

If you feel you would like to be involved in this exciting project please phone/text Barbara 077 1118 3180.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION - ST PATRICK'S

Christmas decoration of St Patrick's will be on Tuesday 17th December from 10 am. It is quite a task to decorate our large church so any help that anyone can give will be much appreciated - if you can spare even half an hour we would love to see you.

I would add my sincere thanks to those who give of their time to decorate the church at Easter and Harvest as well as Christmas - Ella Duddy, Nan Fulton, Etta O'Hara, Nan Adrain, Rosemary Stacey,

June Burbage, Lorna Stevenson and Kathleen Thompson.

The flower list for 2020 will be available shortly and we are grateful to those who contributed this year. Perhaps parishioners would consider marking a significant family event or commemoration by donating to the list. Details are available from the Churchwardens.

Jean Kennedy

SHOE BOXES - SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Many thanks to all those who gave donations for the shoe boxes. £90 was raised for church funds and in total 101 shoe boxes were filled and returned through the church. This year the shoe boxes are being delivered to the Middle East.

Liz/Jean

AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT

*Times of Refreshing -
A winter devotional by
Ruth Gregg*

Ruth is a Director of a Bible College, a Theologian, a Christian Speaker with a special current interest in Revival Studies but much much more important she is the wife of my plumber/handyman who has done many wee jobs round the Rectory! This Daily Devotional takes us on

a journey through the Book of Ruth and would make a perfect gift to enrich your quiet time. There is a small stock in the Church Office and they are priced at £9.99 - first come first served - I hope you enjoy and find inspiration for your walk with God through the winter months.

Mark

CHRISTMAS SPECIALS

You may be interested in the following special services/events across the Parish as we look forward to Christmas:-

- Remember our **Ballyclug Advent Reflections** - Wednesday evenings at 7.30 pm (4th, 11th and 18th December) a chance to sing, pray, reflect and catch your breath! All welcome.
- **Special farewell trip to St Anne's Cathedral** for Bishop Alan's last Christmas Eve Holy Communion. The service starts at 11 pm and drivers will leave from St Patrick's car park at 9.45 pm to allow time for parking etc. Come get a lift or make your own way there. Watch notice sheets for more details. 24 December, 11 pm St Anne's Cathedral - this will replace the normal service in St Patrick's.

- **Christingles, Nativities, Carols** - please see timetable of services over the Christmas period elsewhere in this magazine. Come along - bring all the family and invite a friend/neighbour.
- **Bishop's Leaving Service** - we will only have 5 tickets for parishioners to attend this event! Same as every other Parish in the Diocese!

But I have a cunning top secret plan. All I can say is I will sneak some more Ballymena folk into this event (top secret) so I can't say too much. If you are interested let Lorraine/Sandra know - if too many apply Emma, our curate will draw lots. More details later but don't tell anybody!

God bless.

Mark

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR
 Each day you add an item to the box and on Christmas Eve you donate the contents to a foodbank

THE MAD HOUSE

www.muminthemadhouse.com



Our October 2019 figures are as follows:

Income: £16,652.25

Expenditure: £18,883.11

A **deficit** for the month of **£ -2230.86**

Our Year to Date figures are as follows:

Income: £244,821.39

Expenditure: £222,424.16

This leaves a surplus for the year to date of £22,397.23.

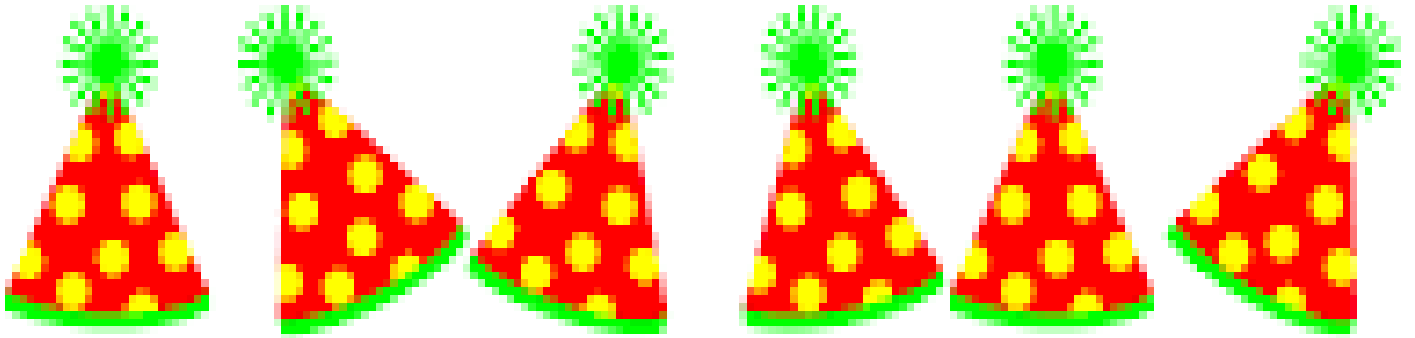
These figures are purely based on income and expenditure through the general CRG account.

Thank You to ...

- The Church Lads Brigade for their donation of £700.
- St Columba's Ladies' Circle for their donation of £50.
- Everyone who made a donation through the Harvest Envelopes, we raised a total of **£4,354**. This will now be distributed to other charitable causes.

Treasurer: Richard J Cotter



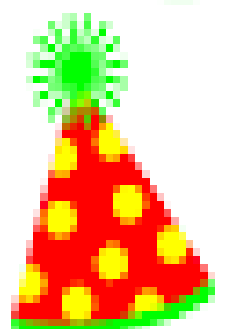
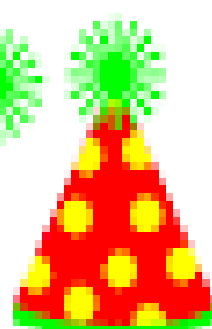
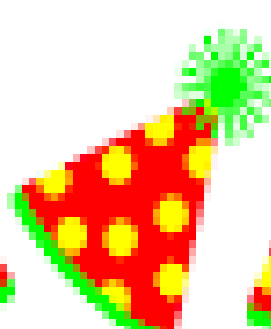
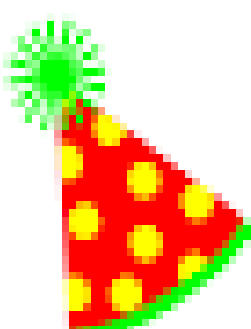
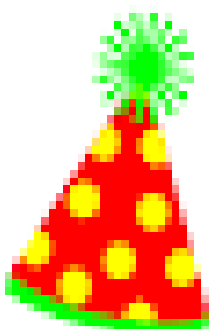
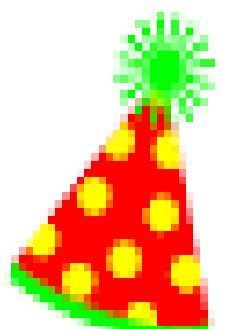
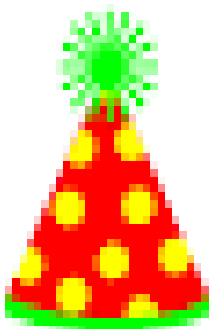
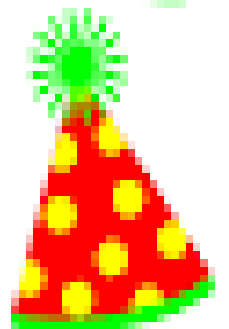
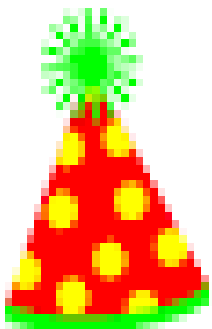
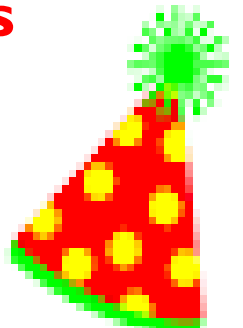
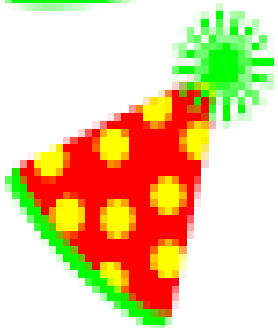
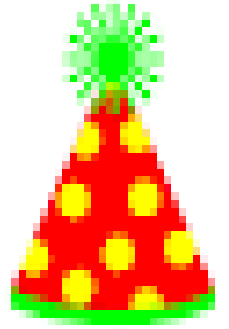
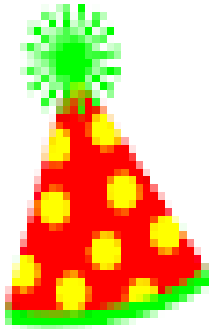


CHRISTMAS PARTY

**For all primary school
children in all organisations
of the Church, Sunday
School and Youth Club**

**Saturday 14th December
St Patrick's Church Hall
7 to 8 pm for primary
school age
8 - 10 pm for secondary
school age**

**Games, Music, Christmas
Jumper Competition,
Snacks and Santa.
Come along and join the
fun!**



Famous Prayers

Not written by anyone very famous but this is a prayer written by a World War One soldier called Cyril Winterbotham - he signed up in September 1915 and wouldn't live to see Christmas 1916 and his name is to be found on the Thiepval Monument (Pier 5B).



His prayer reminds us that the true wonder of the 'Saviour who came' might only be expressed keenly in the cruelest of times:-

A Christmas Prayer from the Trenches

Not yet for us may Christmas bring
Good-will to men, and peace;
In our dark sky no angels sing,
Not yet the great release
For men, when war shall cease.

So must the guns our carols make,
Our gifts must bullets be,
For us no Christmas bells shall wake;
These ruined homes shall see
No Christmas revelry.

In hardened hearts we fain would greet
The Babe at Christmas born,
But lo, He comes with pierced feet,
Wearing a crown of thorn,-
His side a spear has torn.

For tired eyes are all too dim,
Our hearts too full of pain,
Our ears too deaf to hear the hymn
Which angels sing in vain,
'The Christ is born again.'

O Jesus, pitiful, draw near,
That even we may see
The Little Child who knew not fear;
Thus would we picture Thee
Unmarred by agony.

O'er death and pain triumphant yet
Bid Thou Thy harpers play,
That we may hear them, and forget
Sorrow and all dismay,
And welcome Thee to stay
With us on Christmas Day.





The Curate Writes

Christmas Loading ...

I love the season of Advent and I love Christmas. I love finding the perfect Christmas present, eating turkey and ham and decorating the tree. As many of you know, I love to sing and at this time of the year I get great joy from Advent and Christmas carols. Most of all I love the build-up and the excitement of waiting for Christmas Day. After all, that is what the season of Advent is all about!

When we think of Advent we might think about Advent Calendars with all of the chocolates hidden behind little paper doors. Advent is about so much more than this. It is a time of waiting, of anticipation and of expectation. It is a time in which the Church prepares to celebrate! It's like Christmas is 'loading.' It's coming! It's nearly here!



Advent is the first season of the Church calendar. This year it begins on Sunday 1st December and ends on Tuesday 24th December. The term 'advent' comes from the Latin 'adventus' meaning the arrival of something or someone notable. So in these 24 days of the season of Advent we look forward to the coming of one very special child. We look forward to Christmas when Jesus came into the world in His incarnation. We look forward to His coming as our Saviour and King in the form of a little baby. Each year at Christmastime we celebrate Christ's 'first' Advent. However, we still long to see Him, we still wait in expectation for Him to come again. This is what we might call the 'second' Advent of Christ - that glorious day on which he returns. Surely we should be looking forward to this Advent every day of the year?

I love the hymn, 'Come, O long-expected Jesus' by Charles Wesley:

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

These words tell of our longed-for King, the one who comes to set His people free; to release us from our sin and fears; to bring salvation to everyone who turns to Him; to bring joy to every longing heart. The words fill me with so much joy and remind me of the fact that Jesus came as a child born of Mary and that He will come back again!

In the coming weeks the busyness of Christmas will overtake us - the shopping, the cake making, the family and friends visiting and all of the necessary overeating! It is easy to forget what these next few weeks are really about. These coming weeks should be weeks of excitement and expectation of Christmas - the arrival of Christ! I encourage you to take time out each day to follow our Advent reading plan. This season is a wonderful opportunity to remind ourselves of the promises made by God in the Old Testament and of the whole story leading up to Jesus' birth. Let's build up the expectation and anticipation of Advent. Let's be waiting expectantly for Christmas Day not because of the gifts we'll give and receive, but because it is the day we celebrate Christ's birth!

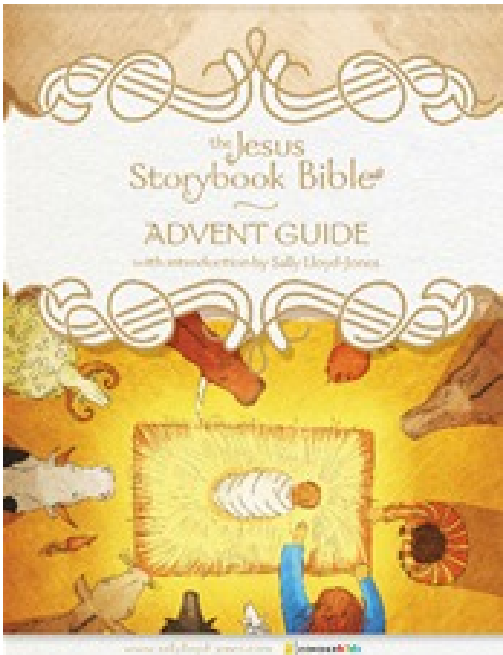
EMMA

Advent Reading Plan

- December 1 | *Luke 1:1-4* | An Account from Eyewitnesses
December 2 | *Genesis 49:8-12* | The Sceptre of Judah
December 3 | *Isaiah 9:6-7 & 11:1-5* | A Child is Born & A Branch of Jesse
December 4 | *Micah 5:2-4* | A Ruler Born in Bethlehem
December 5 | *Matthew 1:1-17* | Jesus's Ancestry
December 6 | *Matthew 1:18-25* | The Virgin Birth
December 7 | *Matthew 2:1-12* | The Visit of the Magi
December 8 | *Matthew 2:13-15* | Escape to Egypt
December 9 | *Matthew 2:16-18* | Herod's Order
December 10 | *Matthew 2:19-23* | Return to Nazareth
December 11 | *Luke 1:5-25* | John the Baptist's Birth Foretold
December 12 | *Luke 1:26-38* | Jesus's Birth Foretold
December 13 | *Luke 1:39-45* | Mary's Visit to Elizabeth
December 14 | *Luke 1:46-56* | Mary's Song (The Magnificat)
December 15 | *Luke 1:57-66* | Birth of John the Baptist
December 16 | *Luke 1:67-80* | Zechariah's Song (The Benedictus)
December 17 | *Luke 2:1-7* | Birth of Jesus Christ
December 18 | *Luke 2:8-21* | The Angelic Announcement
December 19 | *Luke 2:22-40* | Simeon's and Anna's Prophecies
December 20 | *John 1:1-5 & 18* | The Pre-Existent Word
December 21 | *John 1:6-8 & 15* | John the Baptist's Witness
December 22 | *John 1:9-14* | The Word Become Flesh
December 23 | *John 1:16-17* | The Law, Grace, and Truth
December 24 | *Isaiah 52:13-53:12* | The Suffering Servant
December 25 | *Revelation 21:1-8* | A New Heaven and a New Earth



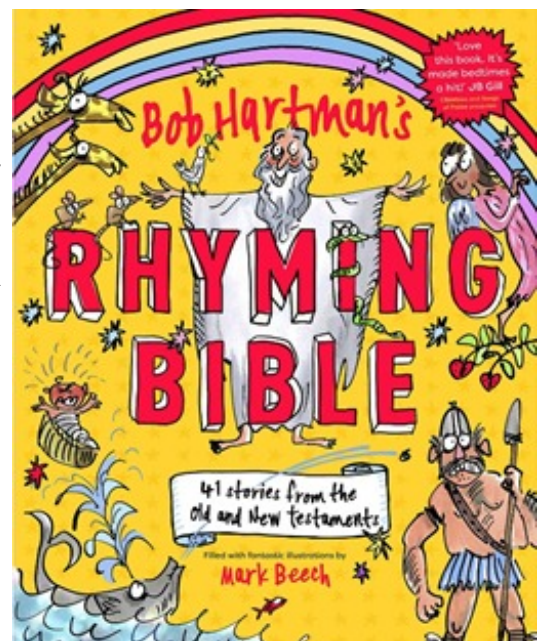
Some Advent Recommendations



Here is a little recommendation for those with young children or grandchildren and who want to spend some time over this Advent season reading through the Biblical story. Many of you will know of or have used the Jesus Storybook Bible. Zonderkidz and author Sally Lloyd-Jones have produced an Advent resource that includes a reading plan, printable colouring pages and make-your-own ornaments. This is all free and downloadable - just google 'Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Calendar,' follow the link to the Faith Gateway website, enter your email address and receive it in pdf form via email. This is a lovely

resource to use with children to explore the story of the first Christmas and God's great big plan!

We had a fabulous weekend in Ballymena Parish at the Connor Big Weekend in the middle of November. It was great to have Bob Hartman with us. Bob is a popular author and storyteller for children. If you are looking for that perfect Christmas book for a young family or a new baby please consider Bob's Rhyming Bible. It is a beautifully illustrated book and the rhymes and stories are great fun! Bob tells 41 tales including that of the Israelites in Egypt, Jonah, Zacchaeus, the birth of Jesus, the Crucifixion and Resurrection. You can buy the Rhyming Bible from Christian bookshops or online.



Emma

CHRISTMAS

St Patrick's, Ballymena

Sunday 1st December 2019
6.30 pm ***No Evening Prayer***

Sunday 15th December 2019
8.15 am Holy Communion 1
11.30 am Sunday School
 Nativity Service
6.30 pm ***No Evening Prayer***

Sunday 22nd December 2019
8.15 am Holy Communion 2
11.30 am Morning Prayer 2
6.30 pm Festival of Nine
 Lessons and Carols
 by Candlelight

24th December - Christmas Eve
11.30 pm ***No Midnight Service***

Christmas Day

8.15 am Holy Communion 2
10.30 am Christmas Family
 Communion 2

Sunday 29th December 2019
8.15 am Holy Communion 1
11.30 am Morning Prayer 1
6.30 pm ***No Evening Prayer***

31st December 2019
11.15 pm Watchnight Service



SERVICES

St Columba's, Dunclug

Sunday 15th December 2019

11.30 am Holy Communion 2

7.00 pm Service of Nine
Lessons and Carols
by Candlelight
followed
by refreshments

Sunday 22nd December 2019

11.30 am Morning Prayer 2

Christmas Day

10.30 am Christmas Family
Communion 2

29th December 2019

11.30 am Morning Prayer 2

St Patrick's, Ballyclug

Sunday 1st December 2019

10.00 am Christmas Tree Carol
Service

6.30 pm *Joint evening
Christmas Tree
Festival Service*

Sunday 15th December 2019

10.00 am Service of Nine
Lessons and Carols

Sunday 22nd December 2019

10.00 am Holy Communion 1

Christmas Day

10.00 am Holy Communion 1

29th December 2019

10.00 am Morning Prayer 1



MIRA SORVINO SEAN ASTIN ALEXA PENAVEGA TED MCGINLEY ANDREA LOGAN WHITE WITH SHEPHERD AND MAJORS

**MOVIE
AND**

**DESSERT
NIGHT**



**Saturday
4th January
7 - 10 pm**

**St Patrick's
Church Hall**

DO YOU BELIEVE?

Showing the Christian Film - 'Do you believe'

Tickets £7.50

Proceeds in aid of Youth Funds

Around the Parish

MOTHERS' UNION

As we approach Christmas and New Year, it's time to look back on another busy year. It's also time to plan our programme for 2020 which has the theme 'Building Hope and Confidence'. I would like to thank the committee and members for their support, especially with projects. To all who knit and sew for the local Special Care Baby Unit, including items for the recent World Prematurity Day. Also those who donate items to our local Women's Aid, which provides a refuge to those affected by Domestic Abuse. Thanks also to the group of ladies who made decorations and decorated a tree for the Festival of Christmas Trees in Ballyclug.



Our DECEMBER meeting is a visit to Ballyclug for the Advent Service on **Wednesday 11th December at 7.30 pm**. Our JANUARY meeting will be on **Wednesday 8th January at 8 pm** in the Minor Hall.

Patricia McWhirter *Branch Chairperson*

MOTHERS AND TODDLERS



In November the children (and adults) enjoyed making decorations for the Mothers and Toddlers tree at the Festival of Christmas Trees in Ballyclug Parish Church. We hope you spotted our Child in a Manger tree.

We will finish on the **10th December** with our traditional Carol Service in the church followed by the Christmas party. Santa Clause has promised to fit us into his busy schedule!

Our faithful volunteer, Mary, has decided to retire from her welcoming duties, at the end of the year. We pass on our grateful thanks for all her years as a volunteer. You will be very welcome to call any Tuesday for a cuppa Mary.

A lunch will be held for our wonderful volunteers in January - details to follow.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all families and volunteers a very Happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Please note that we will resume on the 7th January 2020.

Rota for December and January:-

DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
3 rd Dec	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay, Jean Cunningham and Jean Ross	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay	Hall Set Up
10 th Dec	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Vera Owens and Marlene Gray	Tea
	Mary Steele	Welcoming
	Ray Burbage/Noreen McKeown	Hall Set Up
7 th Jan	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay, Jean Cunningham and Jean Ross	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay	Hall Set Up
14 th Jan	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Vera Owens and Marlene Gray	Tea
	Ann Fisher	Welcoming
	Ray Burbage/Noreen McKeown	Hall Set Up
21 st Jan	Isabel Halliday, Eva McCarthy, Vera Greer and Sandra Duke	Tea
	Dorothy Hegan	Welcoming
	David Oliver/Rodney Gourley	Hall Set Up
28 th Jan	Ruth Murray, Isabell Adair, Vivien Gilmour and Kathleen Thompson	Tea
	Liz Bodel	Welcoming
	Davy Nelson	Hall Set Up

Dorothy (2589 2740), Anna, Catherine and Liz

CHURCH LADS' & CHURCH GIRLS' BRIGADE

Thank you to all the parents and friends who came along to the Church for the Enrolment Service on Friday, 15th November. New members enrolled:



Martins: Ben Livingstone, Harry McAllister, Harper Jackson, Harry Gamble, Max McQuillan, Annie Stewart, Georgia Russell, Jake Wishart, Charlie Rock and Zack Moore

Y Team: Alex Quigley, Rhys Russell, Anish Anand, Kai Anand, Alex Mawhinney and Riley McQuillan

J Team and Seniors: Jamie Quigley, Corrie Black, Robert Johnston, Alayna Wilson, Oonagh Lamont and Sophie Leetch



The Brigade Christmas Party is on **Friday, 13th December** at usual times. Please wear your Christmas jumper and we will have a special visitor.

Our Annual Jumble Sale will be held on **Friday, 6th March, 2020**. After Christmas is a good time for a clear out around the house and garage, so please keep donating items to the Brigade in mind. More details in the February magazine.

All the leaders would like to thank everyone for their continued support and wish all our families a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. Brigade will recommence on **Friday, 10th January, 2020**.

Alan Ross (2589 2740)



Christmas Tree Presents - please bring presents unwrapped for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal as soon as possible.



Youth Club - will finish on **Saturday 7th December** and start again on **Saturday 11th January 2020**. Our Sunday School Carol Service will be held on **Sunday 15th December at 11.30 am**. Children should meet in church at **11.10 am**. They will perform a Nativity Play and there will be mince pies and tea/coffee served after the service.

Christian Aid Family Appeal - Sunday School teachers and children will receive envelopes in which they can give a donation towards the Family Appeal instead of the giving and receiving of presents. These envelopes will be given with the collection at the Carol Service. Envelopes available at back of church for anyone else wanting to contribute.

Sunday School Teachers Christmas Dinner - **Wednesday 4th December at 7 pm** - Rococo.

Sunday School - will finish on **Sunday 8th December** and start again on **Sunday 5th January 2020**. On **Sunday 19th January** we will have a Christingle Service in the hall at **10.00 am**. Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year for 2020 to all our young people and leaders.

Lucy and Alan

We were delighted to host a great weekend with Connor Family Fiesta and Snapshot Sunday followed by an All Age Service. Thanks to Inspire, Bob Hartman and Play It By Ear for coming and to Jill and Christina and their teams. A lot of hard work and effort went into preparing this event which was greatly appreciated by all who attended.



On Sunday 24th we had a Youth Service in the Minor Hall. Our speaker was Christina Baillie and our theme was The Journey. We looked at our first session which was 'Equip' - how we can equip ourselves mentally and physically for the challenges and trials that lie ahead of our faith journey. Thanks to all who came - a great night was had by all.



Name the Elf - the young people are raising money for the Christmas Fair and Church funds. If you would like to guess the name of the elf put your name and guess at the back of the church on the forms with displayed photo. Cost £1 per guess if you guess right you win the elf.

Christmas Fireside Quizzes - are also available at the back of the church, cost £1 proceeds for youth funds.



Come along and join us for our Movie and Dessert Night Saturday 4th January 7 - 10 pm, cost £7.50 for Youth Funds. We will be showing the Christian film, 'Do You Believe'. The film is all about a pastor who is shaken by the visible faith of a street corner preacher. He is reminded that true belief always requires action. His response ignites a journey that impacts everyone it touches in ways that only God could orchestrate.

HEAVEN BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE

When it comes to the Bible, children are mentioned as an intrinsic element of the community of faith, part of God's people. In the Old Testament, we read how important they are: *'These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children'*. (Deuteronomy 6:6-7a). The author of Psalm 78 in verse 4 writes, ... *'We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done'*. It is clear that the Israelites saw children as important.

In the New Testament, there are times when we again read how important children are. One well-known incident is recorded in chapter 10 of Mark's gospel. The disciples are giving Jesus space, but some people are bringing their children to Him. The disciples rebuke them but Jesus says, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."* (Verse 14). There is so much to learn in this short passage but what is most significant is to see that children were vitally important to Jesus.

In this age of testing and assessment for children, especially when facing AQE and GL tests for post-primary school placement, they need to know that their value is not found in a number printed on a piece of paper. These things may seem to be important in that moment and take up headspace for parents and children, but ultimately they are not the defining feature of a child.

Jesus didn't say, "Let the children come to me who are clever, have the right grades and are going to the schools with the best academic results. I'll see the others after." He didn't say anything about what children were good at. He said, *"Let the children come to me ... because the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these."* Children's value and significance comes from something much more important than a number, or the name of a school. Their value comes from the importance that Jesus places on them. They are vital to the Kingdom of God; they hold the keys to faith and a relationship with our Maker.

I know that there is a lot of pressure to perform and for children to do the best that they can in the AQE and GL, but let's not lose sight of Christ's words about their true identity in the midst of encouraging them to do well and walking with them on the journey.

“Children’s value and significance comes from something much more important than a number, or the name of a school. Their value comes from the importance that Jesus places on them.”

For those who choose not to do the AQE or GL, we should support their decision and not make them feel second best for not doing it. Their value also comes from being a child of God, made in His image, who belongs to the Kingdom of God. As adults, let’s not lose sight of that.

From: Ruth Bromley
PCI’s Children’s Development Officer

Christingle Service

**Sunday 19th January 2020
St Patrick’s Church Hall at
10.00 am**

**Celebrating Jesus the Light
of the World**





Christian Aid Family Appeal

Women have the power to liberate themselves, their families and others from oppression. Through their God-given gifts, they could transform lives.

But poverty, inequality, violence and injustice often denies women the opportunity to do so. For those who are also mothers, life is doubly difficult as they fight to protect and raise their children.

This Christmas, we're highlighting the transformational change that women around the world, particularly mothers, can achieve if given the chance - even in the most desperate situations.

Afghanistan

Conflict and drought in Afghanistan forced widow Bibi Aisha and her two children to flee their home. She managed to lead them to safety and find shelter through Christian Aid's local partner RAADA who gave the family a tent.

Bibi Aisha is still vulnerable as the sole breadwinner in a society badly affected by inequality, discrimination and exploitation. But she is determined that her children will prosper:

"I want a bright future for my children," she says, "I want them to be educated."

Bangladesh

Many women face discrimination in Bangladesh, especially those from ethnic minorities. This means they often cannot afford medical help in a crisis - like Amena. She planned to have her second baby at home but as

she went into labour, she started bleeding profusely. Christian Aid's local partner PEPSEP gave Amena a health voucher so that she could attend hospital immediately and give birth safely.



India

Ranjita was forced into manual scavenging work at just nine years old. She earned just a few rupees and a piece of stale bread in return for hours of degrading work cleaning human excrement by hand: “They treated us worse than animals,” she recalled.



Manual scavenging is reserved for the lowest caste in India who are known as Dalit. Despite being outlawed, there are still around 1.2 million manual scavengers, of which 95% are women.

Now a mother to her own children, Ranjita was determined to build a better life for them. Through a community self-help group run by our partner ARUN, she learnt about her rights and felt empowered to apply

for a government compensation grant. This then helped her start a tailoring business.

Now Ranjita can provide for her family: “My children and I are happy now I am earning with dignity.”

Release mothers’ God-given gifts

At Christmas, we remember one of the most powerful stories ever told: Mary’s journey to Bethlehem, to give birth to Jesus. Mary’s bravery, perseverance and devotion brought her family out of danger and enabled God’s hope, love and peace to enter the world.

Mothers like Bibi Aisha, Amena and Ranjita have had the opportunity to use their God-given gifts too, thanks to generous people like you. But many more women need your help today.

Women like Geeta, who also lives in India and is a single mother. Like Ranjita, she was forced into the same dirty work of manual scavenging. Unlike Ranjita, she is still doing it.



Geeta is determined to break the cycle of poverty and provide her daughter with an education and a different future: “I don’t want my daughter to do this. I hope she will have a chance to go to school,” she said.

This Christmas, you could help create more life-changing opportunities for mothers just like Geeta.

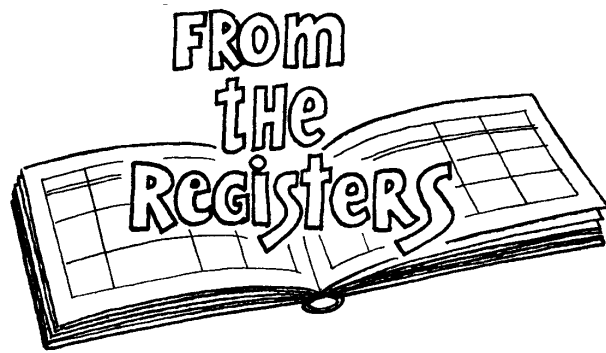
Help mothers use their God-given gifts to escape poverty. Envelopes at back of church.

A view from the pew



St Patrick's Chimes are pictured back in the late 1980's in the BBC Studios during the filming of the Christmas programme 'Ye Tell Me That'

Then rang the bells more
loud and deep
God is not dead, nor doth
He sleep
The wrong shall fail, the
right prevail
With peace on earth, good
will to men.



HOLY MATRIMONY



2nd November	Martin Barr	12 Carnlea Road North, Moorfields, Ballymena
	Rachael Moody	12 Carnlea Road North, Moorfields, Ballymena
23rd November	Stuart Hamill	211 Carnlough Road, Broughshane
	Lyn Marshall	15 Riverside, Broughshane

CHRISTIAN BURIAL



31st October	Thomas Cole	10 Innishowen Park, Ballymena
13th November	Arthur Campbell	7 The Knowe, Ballymena
21st November	Kenneth Cole	20b Thomas Street, Ballymena

Thomas (Tommy) Cole

Thomas was one of a large family. From an early age he enjoyed working with his hands and went on to serve his time as a joiner/cabinet maker with the family firm. He always had a great love of wildlife and the outdoors. However, as work was hard to find in Northern Ireland, he

went as a young man to live in London, but his love of country life meant that he came back after one year. He met and married Caroline and together they set up one of their homes at Kernohan's Farm on the Cushendall Road, Ballymena. He had many different jobs but worked locally for Gallahers, St Patrick's Barracks and Martin & Hamilton. Caroline and Thomas had a family of seven children. He was a private, quiet man who gave his love and attention to his family and to his grandchildren and it is to them that we extend our sincere sympathy and prayers at this sad time.

George Arthur Campbell

George was the youngest of five children born to Edna and William Campbell. He went to the Church School in Ballymoney Street and then attended Ballymena Primary School. After leaving school he worked for various firms and eventually became a self-employed painter and decorator. He met his wife, Ellie while working in Gallahers and they were married in September 1960. They had five children and lived in various homes in the Antrim and Ballymena areas. Eventually they settled in Balmoral Avenue and moved to 7 The Knowe, Ballymena. George was a family man who loved his wife, children and all of his grandchildren. Fishing, music and Ebay were his favourite hobbies. He was a generous, quiet man whose faith sustained him throughout his life. We would extend to his wife, daughters, sons-in-law and all of his grandchildren our sincere sympathy at this sad time.

Kenneth (Kenny) Cole

Kenny was born on 27th September 1966. He was the son of Thomas and Caroline Cole and one of a large family of brothers and sisters. After leaving school Kenny worked in a mobile van which sold sweets, etc. around the Dunvale area of Ballymena. He loved meeting and talking to people. He enjoyed bands, riding his bicycle and walking in the countryside. Kenny was very ill two years ago but he recovered and enjoyed a spell of good health. Unfortunately he died very suddenly and only three weeks after his father Tommy (see above). We extend to all of Kenny's family and friends our sincere condolences at this sad time.





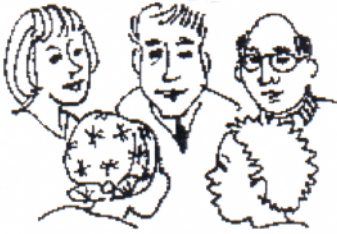
OUR ACTIVITIES

SAINT PATRICK'S

	Day	Time	Venue
<i>Bellringers</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Tower</i>
<i>Bible Fellowship</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Choir Vestry</i>
<i>Church Choir</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Choir Vestry</i>
<i>Church Lads' Brigade</i>			
<i>YBC</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>7.00 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>JTC</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>CLB</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Girls' Friendly Society</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>7.15 pm</i>	<i>Minor Hall</i>
<i>Healer Prayer Group</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>7.15 pm</i>	<i>Church Vestry</i>
<i>Indoor Bowling Club</i>			
	<i>Monday</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Mothers and Toddlers</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>10.00 am</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Mothers' Union</i>	<i>2nd Wed.</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Minor Hall</i>
<i>Still Active Club</i>	<i>3rd Wed.</i>	<i>2.00 pm</i>	<i>Minor Hall</i>
<i>Junior Youth Club</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>7.00 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Senior Youth Club</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Badminton</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>
<i>Sewing Group</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>10.00 am</i>	<i>Parochial Hall</i>

SAINT COLUMBA'S

	Day	Time	Contact
<i>Beavers</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>6.30 pm</i>	<i>Mrs H Weir</i>
<i>Ladies' Circle</i>	<i>4th Monday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Mrs L Hughes</i>
<i>Brownies</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>6.30 pm</i>	<i>Mrs K Black</i>
<i>Guides</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>6.30 pm</i>	<i>Mrs K Black</i>
<i>Senior Guides</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Mrs K Black</i>
<i>Squirrels</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>6.30 pm</i>	<i>Mr P Houston</i>
<i>Cubs</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>6.45 pm</i>	<i>Mrs H Clarke</i>
<i>Rainbows</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>6.15 pm</i>	<i>Mrs H Strain</i>
<i>Scouts</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>7.45 pm</i>	<i>Mr A Coates</i>



OUR WORSHIP

ST PATRICK'S PARISH CHURCH

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.15 am

10.00 am

11.30 am

1st Sunday in the month

6.30 pm

3rd Sunday in the month

4th Sunday in the month

Holy Communion

New Life Service

Morning Prayer

Parish Communion

Evening Prayer

Holy Communion

Living Faith Service

EVERY WEDNESDAY

10.30 am

Holy Communion

ST PATRICK'S, BALLYCLUG

SUNDAY SERVICES

10.00 am

4th Sunday in the month

Morning Prayer

Holy Communion

ST COLUMBA'S, DUNCLUG

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.30 am

1st Sunday in the month

11.30 am

2nd Sunday in the month

3rd Sunday in the month

Holy Communion

Morning Prayer

Family Service

Family Communion

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

ST PATRICK'S

10.00 am

Church

Leaders - Mrs L McLaughlin and Mr A Ross

ST COLUMBA'S

11.30 am

Church

Superintendent - Mrs C Kernohan

HOLY BAPTISM

At Sunday services by arrangement